



**Committee Members:**

Katie Hansen, Chair • Carl Weimer, Vice Chair  
Duane Henderson • Grant Jensen • George Hills  
Pete Kmet • Dave Barnes • Leo Bowman  
Richard Kuprewicz • Shirley Olson  
Bill Rickard • Jean Buckner



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## **Washington State Citizens Committee on Pipeline Safety**

### **Meeting Minutes**

Washington State Investment Board - Olympia, WA

**May 11, 2006**

#### **Present**

Katie Hansen, Chair  
Carl Weimer, Vice Chair  
Duane Henderson  
George Hills  
Richard Kuprewicz  
Pete Kmet  
Grant Jensen  
Shirley Olson  
Bill Rickard  
Dave Barnes

#### **Absent**

Jean Buckner  
Leo Bowman

#### **Public present at the meeting**

Alan Rathbun, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)  
David Lykken, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)  
Tim Sweeney, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)  
Ilyne Lawson, Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC)  
Rebecca Post, Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE)  
Dan Kirschner, Northwest Gas Association (NWGA)  
Daryl Pyne, Chevron Pipeline Company  
Earl Tower, BP Olympic Pipeline Company  
Shaun Mathews, BP Olympic Pipeline  
Keith Meissner, Cascade Natural Gas

#### **Agenda:**

1. Welcome, Introduction of Members and Visitors, Adoption of March 16, 2006 minutes
2. Election of Officers
3. Inspections - What does the UTC do?
4. UTC Update
5. PHMSA/OPS Reauthorization Update
6. Pipeline Safety Strategic Plan - Budget for 2007 – 2009

7. DOE Role and Responsibility "Pipeline Committee Rule" - Pending Rulemaking
8. Citizen Committee Stakeholder Report on Activities
9. "Public Right to Know" - How do we make a decision?
10. Future Meeting Locations and Agendas – Other Business

1. **Welcome and Adoption of March 16, 2006 Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was brought to order. The Chair welcomed all members. The first discussion item was the minutes from the March 16, 2006 meeting. The committee members moved to adopt the minutes as written. The committee modified the order of the agenda by moving the topic "Inspections - What does the UTC do?" ahead of the agenda item "Election of Officers."

2. **Inspections - What does the UTC do?**

David Lykken, Senior Pipeline Safety Engineer, provided the committee with an overview of the roles and responsibilities within the pipeline safety program. The presentation highlighted the requirements states must comply with under federal program certifications for both gas and hazardous liquid programs. David explained the certification requirements are broken down into categories covering areas such as regulatory responsibility, personnel (training and qualifications), inspection and compliance, conducting failure investigations, and program performance. The committee discussed federal interstate and intrastate hazardous liquid and gas standards as administered by the PHMSA, Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS). Virginia, New York, Minnesota, and Arizona were identified as the only other states beside Washington, who have a combined gas and liquid safety program and interstate authority. The committee was interested in seeing a comparison study depicting statistics for the five states involved in interstate liquid programs. Committee members inquired about the federal qualifications and performance mandates for Washington State's gas and liquids programs. David explained that the minimum federal certification requirement for the gas program calls for each inspector to spend 85 days in the field performing compliance related inspections. The committee asked to be kept informed of future developments related to federal mandates and certification requirements.

3. **Election of Officers**

Having served as committee chair for one year, Katie Hansen will be replaced by Carl Weimer as committee chair in July. The committee nominated Leo Bowman to the position of committee vice chair, replacing Carl Weimer. Leo Bowman was elected unanimously subject to his approval. Although Leo was not present at the meeting, Katie was able to telephonically confirm Leo's acceptance of the nomination and relay his consent to committee members.

4. **UTC Pipeline Safety Update**

Alan Rathbun, WUTC Pipeline Safety Director, provided an update from the pipeline safety section.

#### Williams NW Capacity Replacement Project

Major construction activities on the four segments of Williams Capacity Replacement project begins next week. The four segments are located in the following counties: Whatcom, Skagit/Snohomish, North King and Pierce/Thurston. UTC staff will be observing construction as interstate agents for PHMSA/OPS. Further information on this project is available at Williams' website.

#### UTC Damage Prevention Initiative

We have sent letters to each pipeline operator requesting data on entities that have damaged their pipeline without utilizing the "one-call" system. The request asks for their most flagrant violators. After we receive this information in late May, our analysis will begin in deciding which cases warrant enforcement action by the Attorney General's office. Other apparent violators will likely receive a strong letter of warning from the commission.

#### Land Use Guidelines in Proximity to Transmission Pipelines

A final draft of a document produced by our ad hoc work group was distributed for final comments. The report, Land Use Planning in Proximity to Natural Gas Transmission and Hazardous Liquid Pipelines will be distributed to a broad spectrum of stakeholders but is specifically aimed at city/county planners and others involved in permitting development activities. A meeting of the work group is set for Tuesday, May 23 to review final edits and make plans for the report's distribution. Copies of the report and its appendices are available on Roundtable Associates website. They will be added to the UTC website shortly. The report is currently maintained by Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) at [http://www.roundtableassociates.com/land\\_use.htm](http://www.roundtableassociates.com/land_use.htm).

#### Status Update on the Avista Incident in Spokane

Staff's investigation of the December 30, 2005 explosion and fire in Spokane is complete. Our investigation included a review of the incident site, Avista's records and several interviews with knowledgeable persons. On March 27, 2006, we received the failure analysis report of the 2-inch plastic pipe by a consultant that we recommended, Engineering Systems Inc. The report stated that the natural gas leak that led to the explosion and fire originated at a crack in the plastic pipe directly adjacent to a coupling that joins two pipe sections. From that point, the gas migrated underground to a point of entry where the building wall meets the foundation. Frost in the upper layers of the ground likely kept the gas from venting to the atmosphere until it reached the side of the building.

The conclusions of the analysis by Engineering Systems are:

- The pipes and fittings involved in this incident were a brand of plastic pipe called DuPont Aldyl A.
- The physical properties of the material in both pipes were appropriate for Aldyl A. There was no evidence of material degradation.

- The method of joining the pipe sections (socket fusion) on both sides of the coupling were properly made according to the DuPont socket fusion procedures.
- The fracture is associated with a downward deflection of the pipe. Soil settlement around more recent buried utility installations located below the failed gas main most likely caused this downward deflection of the pipe.

We have accepted the consultant's conclusions. The soil settlement was apparently the result of less than adequate soil compaction following construction of other utilities in the area of the failed pipe. We found no apparent violation of federal regulation or state rules associated with this failure. This matter is now closed.

#### Pipeline Safety Fees for FY 2007

Each June, the commission establishes by order the fees to be collected from each of our pipeline operators. This revenue, plus our federal grant, must equal the cost of operation of our pipeline safety program including the support of this Committee. These new fees will follow a new methodology adopted by commission rule last year. Unlike the previous method, fees are allocated using the time spent by pipeline safety staff on each operator's system. The past system utilized pipeline miles as the major driver of the fee amount. The total amount collected in pipeline safety fees for fiscal year 2007 is approximately \$1,366,895 (\$532,000 being the highest fee, and \$64 being the lowest fee).

#### Status Update on Small Gas System Study

Our consultant has made his first visit to Washington to begin conducting his study. He reviewed UTC's small gas system records, interviewed staff and met with one local distribution company. Future visits will include field visits to identifies small gas systems and meetings with other distribution operators.

#### **5. PHMSA/OPS Reauthorization Update**

Carl Weimer, Committee vice chair, covered the status of the Pipeline Safety Act reauthorization process. Over the past month, there were two hearings in the US House, one in front of the Energy Committee and one in front of the Transportation Committee. Although OPS has drafted a bill, the bill must cycle through OPS processes before it can be presented. One of the Committee chairs has expressed a desire to reauthorize the document as it currently exists, but OPS would like to make minor modifications to the current bill. Five areas Congress is concerned with are damage prevention, an increase in state funding, pipeline security issues, low pressure pipelines regulation, and gas pipeline interval re-inspections.

#### **6. Pipeline Safety Strategic Plan - Budget for 2007 – 2009**

Alan Rathbun, WUTC Pipeline Safety Director, briefly discussed the Pipeline Safety portion of the Safety & Consumer Protection Division's budget proposal document. In preparation for the 2007 - 2009 budgets, Pipeline Safety adopted a Strategic Plan identifying its goals, strategies, and initiatives for the corresponding fiscal years. Several

Pipeline Safety initiatives will be exercised in a collaborative effort to achieve the goals and strategies of the Safety & Consumer Protection Division as a whole.

**Public Comment:** Carl Weimer, Committee vice chair, provided comments on the public meeting held in Longview on May 10, 2006. The meeting addressed the proposed Bradwood Landing LNG plant and associated pipeline. The meeting was well attended by citizens concerned with enlarged easements and potential of diminishing property values. Several meeting attendees vocalize their disapproval of the proposed pipeline and LNG facility.

7. **DOE Role and Responsibility "Oil Spill Contingency Plan"**

Rebecca Post from the Department of Ecology (DOE) provided the committee with an overview of DOE's "Oil Spill Contingency Plan" and pending rulemaking. By employing prevention, preparedness, and response units, DOE works with companies to ensure that their worst case oil spill contingency plans are effective. The rules governing the Oil Spill Contingency Plan must be consistent with the Northwest Area Contingency Plan, which include the roles of tribes and local governments and the use of response technologies. DOE's authority is established in RCW 90.56 which states "Ecology shall adopt standards to ensure that the environment will be cleaned up promptly and properly, to the maximum extent practicable." Currently, the vessel and facility oil spill contingency plans provide guidance under two separate WACs. DOE plans to merge both the vessel and facility WACs in to one, while extracting portions of these WACs and adding them into the oil transfer rule. The revised content of DOE's oil transfer and spill rules is expected to be drafted by June and available for comment in July. The committee members commended Rebecca for assembling a very informative presentation and requested to be informed of future developments

8. **Citizen Committee Stakeholder Report on Activities**

Katie Hansen provided committee members with the first draft of the Citizen Committee Stakeholder Report on Activities. Before the July meeting, Katie will make revisions to the draft and send the second draft report to committee members.

9. **"Public Right to Know" - How do we make a decision?**

Carl Weimer drafted a document detailing types of information that should be available to the public. After reviewing the draft, the committee agreed that its most important priority is to determine what the community has a right to know. The committee acknowledged that some of the types of information listed in the draft was currently available on the UTC website, but found that the committee's webpage was sparse on information. The committee also recognized that it has limited control over much of the information that it would like to make available on the committee webpage and agreed to focus first on what it has control over. The committee reviewed the draft and decided to adopt Carl's suggestions:

- Promote the committee's website by posting the website URL on correspondence, agendas, and minutes

- Include a statement about the importance of public knowledge about pipelines on the committee's website
- Post links to websites with additional information about pipelines
- Make communication with the committee easier

The committee discussed the types of information it would have to obtain from other sources. Since much of the information would be provided by the UTC, staff asked the committee what its top three choices would be; whether the data would be historical or current; and how the committee would communicate with pipeline operators concerning information they may consider controversial. By vote of all committee members, the committee found that the most important items are:

1. Basic Pipeline Information
2. Pipeline Maps
3. Intrastate Incidents and Accidents
4. Emergency Contacts

The addition of links or documents related to the DOE's Oil Spill Response Programs, studies on the impact of pipelines on land values, land use reports and other research results were also recommendations made by committee members. The committee agreed to develop an action plan and explore this topic further during the July meeting.

#### 10. **Future Meeting Locations and Agendas – Other Business**

- The Committee Chair could address obtaining additional information from PHMSA during the conference call with Stacy Gerard.
- National Transportation and Safety Board, NTSB, and Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition, SCADA, standards are going to be upcoming discussion topics at OPS Advisory Committee meetings in June 2006.
- Leak detection is going to be an upcoming subject in Washington D.C.
- The September 14, 2006 meeting will be in Spokane for the Spill Response on the Spokane River.
- Since no reappointment notices have come from the Governor's office, staff will inquire further.

#### Next Meeting

The next Citizens Committee meeting is scheduled in Bellevue for Wednesday July 19, 2006 with a tour of the Williams facility on Thursday July 20, 2006. Meeting times and specific location details will be addressed at a later date. Committee members have been provided with a list of hotels in the area, state rate accommodation letters, and menu options for box lunches. The meeting location will be communicated via e-mail and posted to the WUTC website. Committee members asked for clarification regarding the traveling distance requirement as it pertains to overnight lodging eligibility and staff will follow-up with members on this issue.

The meeting adjourned at 2:50 PM.